

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6507  
INFO AMEMBASSY VICTORIA

C O N F I D E N T I A L NAIROBI 5281

E. O.11652: GDS  
TAGS: AMGT, PFOR, XA, SE  
SUBJECT: US GOALS AND OBJECTIVES IN SEYCHELLES

REF: A. STATE 291277; B. STATE 078942

1. OVERVIEW: SEYCHELLES, A SMALL ISLAND REPUBLIC WHICH IS COMPOSED OF 92 FAR FLUNGS ISLANDS IN A MARITIME ZONE TOTALLING AN ESTIMATED 500,000 SQUARE MILES, ACHIEVED INDEPENDENCE FROM THE UNITED KINGDOM IN JUNE 1976 UNDER A BRITISH-SPONSORED COALITION GOVERNMENT. THE INDEPENDENCE GOVERNMENT WAS FORMED BY THE CONSERVATIVE MAJORITY PARTY OF JAMES MANCHAM AND THE FORMER OPPOSITION PARTY LED BY FRANCE ALBERT RENE. MANCHAM SERVED AS PRESIDENT AND RENE AS PRIME MINISTER UNTIL JUNE 5, 1977 WHEN A WELL-EXECUTED AND NEARLY BLOODLESS COUP D'ETAT MOUNTED BY RENE SUPPORTERS TOPPLED MANCHAM. RENE SUCCEEDED TO THE PRESIDENCY AS THE HEAD OF A LEFT OF CENTER GOVERNMENT. ALTHOUGH PRESIDENT RENE HAS GIVEN UNEQUIVOCAL PUBLIC AND PRIVATE ASSURANCES THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WILL HONOR ALL INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS ENTERED INTO BY THE WESTERN-ORIENTED MANCHAM GOVERNMENT(SPECIFICALLY, INCLUDING THE 1976 TEN-YEAR BILATERAL AGREEMENT ON THE CONTINUED PRESENCE OF IMPORTANT USAF SATELLITE TRACKING STATION ON THE PRINCIPAL ISLAND OF MAHE),  
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THE NEW GOVERNMENT HAS CLEARLY INDICATED ITS INTENTION TO PURSUE A MORE NON-ALIGNED FOREIGN POLICY. FORMULATION OF DOMESTIC POLICIES AND PROGRAMS IS LIKELY TO BECOME INCREASINGLY INFLUENCED BY SOCIALIST THINKING.

2. SINCE INDEPENDENCE, SEYCHELLES' PARAMOUNT OBJECTIVE

HAS BEEN RAPID ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND GOS HAS LOOKED ABROAD FOR PUBLIC AND PRIVATE CAPITAL. TO DATE, GENERAL WESTERN INTERESTS IN THIS STRATEGICALLY SITUATED NATION HAVE BENEFITTED FROM AN HISTORIC WESTERN ORIENTATION AND LARGE-SCALE BRITISH AND, MORE RECENTLY, FRENCH CAPITAL ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS. THUS FAR, THE SOVIET UNION AND PRC, BOTH OF WHICH HAVE LARGE RESIDENT DIPLOMATIC MISSIONS, HAVE BEEN UNABLE TO OFFER ASSISTANCE WHICH IS ATTRACTIVE TO GOS.

3. US POL/MIL (TRACKING STATION, USN SHIP VISITS, P-3 AND OTHER MILITARY AIRCRAFT VISITS) AND OTHER INTERESTS HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED IN THE PAST DECADE AT RELATIVELY SMALL COST TO USG. GIVEN MAJOR ANGLO-FRENCH EFFORT AND ASSUMING IT IS MAINTAINED AT PRESENT LEVELS, THERE IS NO REASON WHY US SHOULD BECOME MAJOR DONOR IN SEYCHELLES. NONETHELESS, DEFINABLE AND IMPORTANT US INTERESTS WOULD BENEFIT FROM MODEST INCREASE IN DIRECT US PARTICIPATION IN SEYCHELLES' DEVELOPMENT.

4. PRESENT US PROGRAMS (PL 480 TITLE II, SELF- HELP, PEACE CORPS, AND INTERNATIONAL VISITOR) RECEIVE GOVERNMENTAL AND PUBLIC APPRECIATION FAR OUT OF PROPORTION TO RESOURCES EXPENDED. POST WILL CONTINUE ONGOING ATTEMPT TO MAXIMIZE IMPACT OF THE POSITIVE REACTION TO PRESENT EFFORTS. IN NON-PROGRAMATIC AREA, CONFIDENTIAL

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EMBASSY ACTIVITIES TO KEEP KEY OFFICIALS INFORMED OF US FOREIGN POLICY POSITIONS AND THEIR RATIONALE WILL ALSO BE EMPHASIZED. A SMALL EMBASSY-OPERATED REFERENCE ROOM FOR THE USE OF CIVIL SERVANTS AND SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS WILL INCLUDE INFORMATIONAL ASPECT.

5. EMBASSY ADMINISTERED SELF-HELP PROGRAM HAS BEEN PARTICULARLY EFFECTIVE AND WELL-RECEIVED AND POST REQUESTS INCREASE TO 50,000 FROM PRESENT FY 78 FUNDING LEVEL OF DOLS 20,000. IF GOS CONCURS, ENLARGED, RESPONSIVE AND CLOSELY-MONITORED PEACE CORPS PROGRAM IS ANOTHER AREA WHICH SHOULD BE ACCORDED PRIORITY ATTENTION.

6. EMBASSY VICTORIA IS ATTEMPTING TO MOUNT SYSTEMATIC, BUT MODEST DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM BUILT AROUND SUPPORT FOR FOOD CORPS RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT AND A TITLE III FOOD FOR DEVELOPMENT PROJECT. SUCH AN AID PROGRAM WOULD ASSIST GOS IN ITS EFFORT TO ACHIEVE MAJOR ECONOMIC OBJECTIVE OF SELF-SUFFICIENCY IN MOST BASIC FOOD STUFFS AND SOCIAL GOAL OF FULL

EMPLOYMENT AND MORE EQUAL DISTRIBUTION OF NATIONAL WEALTH.

7. ASIDE FROM DEVELOPMENT ISSUE, USG COMMITMENT OF MODEST RESOURCES WILL DEMONSTRATE TO FLEDGLING GOVERNMENT, NOW BEING ACTIVELY CULTIVATED BY SOVIETS, THAT US IS PREPARED TO ASSIST DEVELOPMENT IN CRITICAL POST-INDEPENDENCE PERIOD. IT WILL ALSO SOLIDIFY FAVORABLE POSITION US NOW ENJOYS IN COUNTRY WHOSE CURRENT AND LONG-RANGE IMPORTANCE TO US STRATEGIC, REGIONAL AND MULTILATERAL INTERESTS FAR EXCEEDS ITS SMALL SIZE. THE KEY QUESTION OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL  
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YEARS IS WHETHER GOS WILL RETAIN ITS PRESENT ORIENTATION WHICH, THOUGH NON-ALIGNED, IS SUPPORTIVE OF US INTERESTS, OR WILL DRIFT INTO MORE RADICAL POSTURE. US POLICIES AND PROGRAMS, IN COMBINATION WITH THOSE OF OTHER WESTERN STATES, WILL GREATLY INFLUENCE THE ANSWER OF THIS QUESTION.  
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